THE SUCCESS OF INDIAN DEMOCRACY WITH MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: AN INSPIRATION FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

BINA RAI

Assistant Professor, Political Science, R.G. (P.G.) College, Affiliated to C.C.S. University, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

India as a multicultural polity has adopted the institutional forms of constitutionalism and the Rule of law, although its society, economy and history are very different from that of the countries where these forms originated. Pathologies pertaining to the functioning of these institutional forms pose serious problems in all countries where primordial cultural and ethnic identities of different groups are being revived and asserted. 'Unity in Diversity', an oft-repeated aspiration in India, seeks to accommodate differences within a frame work of shared basic values and common interests. Such a framework requires the conviction that unity is best fostered by tolerating diversity, that dissenting views should freely coexist with the dominant values of society, and interaction among diverse peoples, ethnic and religious groups, cultures and sub cultures is a positive force for creativity innovation and change.

KEYWORDS: *Civil Society, Federalism, Grassroots Democracy, Nationhood, Secularism & Unity in Diversity*

Original Article

INTRODUCTION

At the end of the first decade of twenty-first century, a debate has begun that in all likelihood will widen and deepen in the coming period and it is about pursuing and building an "Indian Social Democracy". Over the past two decades, the themes of democracy and democratization have moved to the centre of all political stage all over the world. The democracy discourses has also acquired multiple tones, interpretations, and agendas with the emergence of a new middle class on the one hand and on the other hand the rising aspirations and assertion of social groups for a share in political power as well as economic resources and benefits from the State. As the government got reoriented to economic growth through liberalization policies, the issues of equality, welfare and democracy have come to occupy a central place both in party political rhetoric as well as political studies on India. For a long time, Indian democracy was considered a puzzle, a paradox, and an enigma, especially by western political scientists interested in Indian studies. Over the past two decades, those who initially did not consider India as a democracy, or who were skeptical of the democratic condition of the country, or its chance of survival as a democracy, began although grudgingly, to recognize it as a democracy by saying that they have now discovered answers to the paradox or solved the puzzle. Now most analysts of Indian politics acknowledge that India has been a successful democracy and seek explanations to it. Atul Kohli has brought out an edited volume called **The Success of India's Democracy (2001)**, mostly with contribution from political scientists based in the Western academic institutions. He points out an important lesson from India's success: within the framework of a centralized state, moderate accommodation of group demands, especially demands based on ethnicity, and some decentralization of power strengthens democracy.

The context of political development in a new nation such as India, then, is that of an ancient land slowly

seeking to incorporate into its womb the best elements of the culture of the modern world, without at the same time destroying its old age traditions and diversities. Such an attempt has been endorsed in the form of a "democratic" pedigree that has been interacting with other and older pedigrees for more than a generation now within the framework of consciously adopted national and local institutions.

The problems can be seen all along. In India the legacy of a long tradition, the integrity of a historically culture, and the great solidarities that were built through religious and social movements that were characteristically Indian had for long acted as buffers against an inherently fissiparous situation. The social system provided a key of political stability.

Political development, even more than economic development, is essentially long-term process. And it is not necessarily unilinear and cumulative, nor can it be substantially affected by exogenous factors. The spread of new values and aspirations, on the other hand, once started is a fast and cumulative process, and is greatly influenced by exogenous factors. Indian model of democracy have three aspects, which was different from the other authoritarian structures prevailing in many newly independent Third World countries.

- The Indian state was expected to play a central role in bringing about social change, modernization and empowerment.

- It was expected to be multifunctional in character, representing different interests, while remaining functionally democratic.

- Finally, India provided a unique model of centralizing federation, while providing adequate space for multi-centered and multi-cultural structures.

India adopted a democratic constitution in 1950 and since the last more than 65 years has succeeded in putting it into actual practice, without changing its basic structure. But for all these years democracy as a form of Government and as a frame work of organizing politics has remained a continuous category in India. Parliamentary democracy is seen as a compromise to be accepted only for a transitional period. Some of them challenge the very foundations of democracy and suggest alternative forms to realize the ideal while others recommended reforms within the representative system itself. One of the earliest and most scathing critiques of the western democratic model came from Mahatma Gandhi. He believed that Western democracy was diluted form of fascism, only in two aspects did democracies differ from fascist regimes. The latter had much more highly organized pogrom of violence than did democracies and democracies 'have the backing of their government.' Gandhi believed that the rule of their majority had narrow application and it was slavery to be amenable to the majority, no matter what its decision here. The true objective of democracy according Gandhi was **"that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. This can never happen except through non-violence."** He thought decentralization, in which a completely self-sufficient and autonomous village capable of managing all its affairs by itself was the key unit, was the logical corollary of non-violence. In his ideal state, national life becomes so self-regulated and so perfect that no representation becomes necessary and everyone becomes has own ruler. To him democracy was an impossible thing until power was shared by all. Following in the footsteps of the Mahatma, VinobaBhave made a distinction between rajniti the politics of power. Vinoba's lokniti rejected parliaments, parties and elections and believed a decision-making through consensus, where people transcended all differences.

The immediate aim of Vinoba's Sarvodya movement was to localize production, distribution, education and defense and achieve decentralization through regional self-sufficiency. In his scheme all villages would nominate their best

servants from their citizens by consensus and elections, majority would be replaced by appointments by unanimous consent. He wanted to replace violent coercion and force of law with personal influence of dedicated social workers whose moral force was 'uncontaminated by any lust for power.'

If by decentralization we mean the participation of people in the decision-making at the local level. The Kerala experiments comes nearest to it. It is reported that in many villages people being directly involved in deciding priorities in planning. People's movement have also given a call of 'Hamare Gaon Mein Hamara Raj' meaning the villagers should rule over their villages and they should have control over resources at the local level.

For the rest, everything about Indian democracy that unfamiliar or inexplicable in terms of Western democracies has been flung into the basket of Indian exceptionalism. That basket is now bulging at the seams and even overflowing as almost everything. That is central to India's democratic experience now lies in it, and the lid no longer fits.

According to the standard western understanding of democracy, the conditions that are hospitable to democratic institutionalization include a homogenous society and reasonable social and economic equality. India being highly diverse, multicultural and hierarchical society with a predominantly agrarian (often feudal) economy was assumed to lack a cultural predisposition to democracy. However, the experience of last two decades in particular has shown that the idea of democracy has irreversibly entered the Indian political imagination, substantively transforming the principle of political authority in Indian society. We may of course qualify this assertion by recognizing that this phenomenon also places a greater strain on democratic structures understood in term of Western institutions.

The Indian experience interrogates the received wisdom of democratic theory and qualifies some of its usually uncontested assumptions. One explanation of the success of India's democratic institutions suggested that British colonialism was unique in providing opportunities of political participation to the nationalities which equipped them with the requisite skills and so laid the foundation for democratization after independence. Independent India's experiment with democracy also presents a contrast to the troubled political history of India's neighbors in the subcontinent in which despite the same historical legacy, military regimes have been the rule and democratic regimes the exception.

The practice of democracy in India speaks to at least three important debates in democratic theory:

- **Democracy and Diversity**

- **Democracy and Development**

- **Democracy and Civil Society**

Democracy and Diversity

Classical liberal theory was till the middle of the 20th century, rather ambivalent on the question of cultural diversity, but is blind diversity is bound to be insufficiently respectful of cultural plurality. This is so because the presumption of equality precludes a special sensitivity to those groups which by virtue of their distinctive cultural identity are rendered socially unequal.

The Indian experience anticipated this debate, in the sense that this discussion on community and nation in the freedom movement as also this deliberations of the Constituent Assembly, resulted in a Constitutional document that was more sensitivity to the needs of a plural society than any other Constitution till that time. The Indian Constitution was unique in providing for rights for cultural collectivities, at a time when the debate in political theory. Even as the

Constitution enunciated the quintessentially liberal principle of State neutrality between religious minorities. For social groups disadvantage by histories of oppressive social practices, the Constitution made special provisions for compensatory discrimination, through reservations in representative institutions, public employment and education. Setting apart the Indian State's role in effectively fomenting and ineffectually managing ethnic conflict, the last sixty years has nuanced the debate on democracy and diversity considerable. Even the Indian Constitution showed the commitment to cultural rights for minority communities, sometimes endorse practices that violate the principle of gender justice, as also the constitutionally guaranteed rights of equal citizenship.

Democracy and Development

The second debate to which the Indian experience is germane is, of course, the debate on democracy and development. 'Development' was naturally defined in fairly conventional terms, viz. as economic growth. By this definition, the Indian economy has not performed spectacularly well, and certainly not in any way comparable to the economic performance of the so-called Asian Tigers. Contemporary politics in India is characterized by issues and movements that seek to challenge and re-define the meaning of both democracy and development. Democratic states are despite all their flaws, somewhat more likely to be responsive to people's needs than undemocratic ones. The enthusiastic participation of India's poor in elections certainly suggests that the poor are not indifferent to the importance of their civil and political rights. In any event, if we value democracy for its own sake rather than for any instrumental purpose that it might serve, we would attach greater importance to democracy and try to calibrate our other social and economic goals to the limitations imposed by it. This expanded notion translates development into terms that are more immediately human beings, instead of the complex statistical data which, whether they report growth rates that are dismally low or excitingly high, make sense chiefly to economists, and are otherwise far removed from the real lives and experience of ordinary people. It is this sense of development that is more compatible with democracy, as both are informed by the like objective of making people participants in a common endeavor.

Democracy and Civil Society

In descriptive terms, civil society is frequently conceptualized as a space or an arena which stands in necessary opposition to the state, it's other, that which is defined in terms of and against. Indeed, following Hegel, it is often defined as the realm of social interaction that falls between the family, on the one hand, and the state, on the other. This implies that civil society must be independent of the stat, in principle accessible to all citizens, and a genuinely participatory arena of free civic engagement, deliberation, discussion, and dialogue. The state, it is believed, should play a positive role in the promotion of civil society, by providing the institutional frame work within which civil society can prosper and flourish. Thus to the extent that it guarantee (or not) freedom, rights and equality for its all citizens, it can encourage or inhibit civil society. There is a clear presumption of democracy here, not only because civil society has potential to ensure political accountability, but also because it is genuinely participatory sphere, open to all. To this meaning of civil society, the existence of many voluntary associations and institutions such as a free press is crucial.

Recent Indian experience cautions us against ignoring the difference between the descriptive and prescriptive aspects of civil society, because these aspects do not always courage, and because not all groups that inhibit the space we call civil society are animated by democratic ideals and purpose. One of the reason why Indian democracy has expanded to cover disadvantage groups has to do, arguably, with collective action in the space of civil society. The importance of civil society in India is intimately linked to the future of democracy. On the one hand, and the absence of necessary conditions

for the realization of democracy, on the other.

While Indian democracy today is, in institutional terms, fairly well secured, it remains embattled by forces both external and internal. Internally, it continues to be faced by the enduring challenge of creating a more equal society, and reducing the vast economic disparities that are being accentuated by the process of globalization. That process, of course, represents the major external challenge, seeking to legislate global regimes in such matter as trade, environmental regulations, and intellectual property. Accompanying these are the attempts to lay down global standards for 'good governance', and to forge networks between NGOs for the creation of a 'transnational' civil society.

Federal System

The success of federalism in India is undoubtedly the result of a 'federalization' process that has taken place through the federal structure of government established by the Constitution, there has been taken place a crystallization of relationship between national state, and district levels.

The Federalizing Factors Identified in the Literature on Indian Federalism Include, among Others, Judicial Pronouncements, Economic Changes, the 73rd and 74th Amendments and the Transformation of Party System.

Federalism in India have different characteristics and political thinks define their own way. But India gave new definition of federalism as per requirement of Indian social-political conditions and described as 'quasi-federal' and centralized to the extent of withering away of federalism. The Government of India today cannot be imagined without recognition of the federal principles. The phenomenon of federalism in India has historically evolved and it still in the process of evolution. It's now developing into a 'people's democracy' model by decentralization and empowerment of local Government. **Grass Root Participation** where evidence from several Indian states indicates that India is better able to make democratic local government work well than are most other countries. The Directive Principles of State Policy in Article 40 which is Gandhian in essence embodies the principle. The functioning of the Indian polity necessitated a proper enactment to institutionalize the PRIs and Municipal bodies in India. In that sense, the year 1992 can be regarded as the year of great achievements when 73rd and 74th these two Amendments created the third tier in the administrative set up in India, and thereby making an attempt to establish grassroots democracy in India. In India from the ancient times there have been some sort of local governance systems. References of *Gram Sangha* can be found in the writings of Manu and even epics like *Mahabharata, Ramayana, and* Kautilya's *Arthshasra and Sukracharyas's Nitishastra".* Panchayat literally means a 'council of five' from the ancient times. Panchayats, comprising residents of a village had been performing essential administrative as well as judicial functions.

After independent in 1952, the launching of Community Development Programme with the focus on popular participation can be seen to set the ball into motion for the organization of Panchayati Raj System in India. Hence, to assess the failure of this program and make recommendations for democratic decentralization and various committees formed. After recommendation of committees which can be regarded as the preparatory stages for the ultimate passage of 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts 1992. Since these Amendments local self-government institutions, though they continue to be the creatures of state-legislation, have acquired a Constitutional sanction. This planning, as well as contracts for local public works. Yet, these Panchayat and municipal bodies have a long way to go. No state legislation has devolved in practice all the powers envisaged for them in the 11th (29 subjects) and 12th (18 subjects) Schedules of the Constitution. A study of Jayal (2006) shows that the massive political mobilization and equitable representational effect of this first

round of 'Panchayats Raj Institutions'. After these Amendments much work has to be done in order to fully realize the aims and objectives. Never the-less they are significant stepping stone towards establishment of grassroots democracy.

Secularism (Multi-Cultural Society)

Another important dimension of the democracy in India is its secular nature. The important relationship between the state and the nation in India is constitutionally defined in 'secular' or better 'multicultural', terms. To some observers, the secular ideology of the Indian State appears as a paradox in view of the deeply religious orientation of the Indian society. This phenomenon must be understood in terms of the nature of Indian nationalism. The civic-territorial conception of the nation in India was conceptualized in terms of aggregation of the various cultures and communities that had co-existed within the same territorial and social space. This was not only because Indian religions lacked the institutions of an autonomous corporate church. But the nationalists were also sensitive to religious cleavages in Indian society.

The concept of secularism adopted in the Indian Constitution combines the Neruvian and the Gandhian approaches to Indian citizenship. The constitution first guarantees a series of Fundamental Rights- right to equality before law, right to political, civil, occupational and religious freedoms and protection of life and personal liberty; right against exploitation, and right to constitutional remedies – to all Indian citizens irrespective of religion, race, caste, creed, sex, place of birth or any of them. In this extends some cultural and educational and religious institutions of their choice.

Indian secularism is different from Western versions of secularism of which two broad models are (a) the de facto British secularism where the State has become secular in spite of the conventional association of the Anglican Church of England with the State, and (b) de jure American and French models where the Constitution puts a formal wall of separation between the State and church/religion. The most significant indicator of the success is that there is no political party in India that has formally rejected the constitutional ideal of secularism.

As a result of religious fundamentalism, nonetheless, the secular State in India has come under tremendous strain. However, the future of secular State in this country should never be in doubt. This is so not only because of the millennial tradition of "high tolerance and low integration" in this Indian society but also because both secular and religious nationalist have stake in the multicultural secular State, which is the only viable framework for civilized well-being and national unity. Again the immense possibilities of pluralists and federal politics in India are unfolding in electoral politics and coalition/minority Governments that tend to promote secular politics. Another one point is more important no political party demanded the abolition of the secular State in India.

Multi-Party System

Democratization in former colonial states has been inconsistent and erratic. India has been an exception. It has maintained and consolidated a democratic system, despite the fact that the preconditions often associated with democracy, ranging from industrialization and mass literacy to a minimum standard of living, were absent in the 1950s when India first became a democratic, secular republic. So political parties in India have a long history. During the colonial times, they mobilized people for the freedom struggle, articulated national interest and interest of different social groups and classes, participated in electoral politics, formed governments and opposition, and some, such as communist party, worked for radical restructuring of society and the state.

Over the past 65 years, political parties in India have undergone a great deal of change, both in quality and quantity. Some of the old parties have spilt several times, some have withered away, and many new parties have been

formed. The nature of party competition has changed, and there is no uniform pattern of party competition across the States of India. Hasan (2002a) notes that Indian democracy in the 1950s and the 1960s was not seriously competitive. However, owing to greater participation and importance of electoral politics, competition increased in the 1970s and the 1980s. The 1990s witnessed a succession of minority or coalition government.

Such a structuring of political communications has led to a very open system. Not only is there freedom to form new parties and frequent movements between parties, but there is another kind of openness which is somewhat peculiar to India: the continuous interaction between opposition parties and factions within the government party. Once this is perceived it will also be seen that a two party system does not necessarily provide an adequate frame work for coalition-making and the assimilation of diverse identities that characterized a plural society. Evidence of mounting frustration and anomic in some western nations suggests that even there a two-party system often fails to provide efficient means of political choice and interaction, especially for minority and dissident groups, and that a more dispersed organization of parties, with linkages at different levels of government, may perhaps do this better.

Women in Democratic System

The theory of democracy and State in India is most underdeveloped in relation to the women's question. This is fact may be true not only of India but the West as well. Everywhere half of the humanity, euphemistically "the better half", was last to be enfranchised in the march of modern democracy. Gendering governance in India is now an 'in thing' but it has come lately. Women in India got the voting right under the Government of India (GOI) Act of 1919. The GOI 1935 extended suffrage to more than six million women. When elections were held under this Act, eight women were elected from 'general' constituencies and 42 from 'reserved' constituencies. When provincial ministries were formed under this Act, six women were included as ministers. The contribution of the freedom struggle in involving women in social and political spheres in India is considered tremendous. More remarkable is that this participation was forthcoming not only from upper class / caste / educated women but also from middle class / caste and rural women. Of course the record of women's participation after Independence is limited. But the most important thing is that where the developing country have more or less top women political leaders who represent their country successfully internally and internationally. We didn't found any Women Prime-Minister or President in developed countries after Margret Thatcher (U.K.), Edith Cresson (France- 323 Days) and Canada, New Zealand or Germany, but these names or one time or few days and what about most powerful country U.S.A. or China or again above mentioned countries. India have female leaders at every level. India was perhaps the first country to recognize the fact that no development efforts and political process can succeed without drawing the women into it. Hence, there has been widespread feeling among the scholars, political leaders and social reformers to empower women. This ultimately led to the approval of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments in 1992, which, in addition to other things, provided for reservation of one-third seats and offices of the chairpersons to women in Panchayati Raj institutions and municipalities, which may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in these institutions. These amendments are considered landmark acts towards empowerment of women. In 1993, these reservations paved the way for inclusion of around one million women in the local self-government institutions of the country. Nupur Tiwari (2009) argues that there is a need for rethink on the rotation of seats for women so that they are able to continue as representatives for a longer time. If they are given 10-15 years of continued opportunity, it can perhaps nudge them in the right direction, and encourage and nurture their desire to be assertive and independent. In order to supplement the Constitutional initiatives, government should provide better working atmosphere and security to women.

Caste (Unite to Society for Political Interest)

We deal here with an ancient civilization, with a highly differentiated social structure, and with long standing traditions and collective orientations. Parliamentary government, parties and opposition movements are essentially modernist impacts on such a society. Everyone recognizes that the social system in India is organized around caste structure and caste identities. Those who complain of "casteism in politics' in India are really looking for a sort of politics which has no basis in society. Traditionally there were two aspects to the secular organization of caste-the governmental aspects and the political aspects. These were buttressed or dissipated by the authority relationship of local elites with the center or centers of society. Religion, occupation, and territory provided the bases for secular mobility. These are still relevant for the generalized process of contemporary secularization; only the emphasis and proportions have changed. We now have more participatory and vertical modes of involvement. It should also be stressed here that different stages in the social organization of politics call from somewhat different leadership and organizational skills, and the movement from one stage to another may entail displacement of one kind of leadership by another; consequently one social group endowed with one type of skills. These were the new entrepreneurs, the new innovators, of politics. But more important than these statistical characteristics is the fact that the innovativeness with which they are credited- their ability to organize, to show a pragmatic evaluation as either undermining or replacing caste as a secular social entity. Any Political system to become stable. This is already happening. Second, the new modes of institutional articulation that secular democratic politics has provided to the social system must themselves become enduring parts of India's traditions."

CONCLUSIONS

Now most analysts of Indian Politics acknowledge that India has been a successful democracy and seek explanations to it. The greatest achievement of India over the last 65 years is that remained a democracy and continues to be so. Stating this may sound like stating something very obvious and ordinary. But it is worth stating. Many nations that became free from colonial rule around the same time, that became independent, could not remain democratic for long. In several postcolonial nations, constitutions could not be made even when they were made, they were very soon scrapped and authoritarian regimes were established. Some of them remained partial or intermittent democracies. All this happened not in same distant lands. The experience of Pakistan demonstrate this. Although India and Pakistan shared a long common culture and political history, the political trajectories of two countries after independence were different.

Throughout India's life as democracy, many commentators were either skeptical of its survival or talked of its exceptionalism. Some thought that democracy would not survive in India because of its bewildering diversity. Fortunately, many of these precondition theories and predictions proved to be wrong. Notwithstanding the ominous views that India would find it very difficult to weld disparate social groups and communities into one nation or to accommodate the interests and aspirations of different groups, caste, and communities, India continued to be a democracy, however faulty it is and however unhappy we are with it. Probably, the dissatisfaction with the way democracy works in India could be as well due to its success and a desire to realize the larger vision of democracy.

Of course, India passed through testing times and political storms over the past six decades. It went through the Emergency period when the fundamental rights were suspended and the political opposition was silenced by using force or threat of force intimidation. Two of its top leaders were assassinated-Mrs. Indira Gandhi while she was in office and Rajiv Gandhi the former Prime Minister. It faced and still is facing formidable challenges to its unity and survival as a nation. Northeast India and Kashmir have been theaters of secessionists and insurrectionary struggles. Some consider India as a

country of many nationalities. There are difference over the nature and practice of Indian federalism and the concentration of powers at the Centre. The developments in the early 1090s, in the wake of Mandal reservations and Mandir controversy, pushed the country into deep trouble.

But somehow India muddled through these difficult times and weathered many a political storm. Emergency was ended within a period of two years as people elected to power those who fought against authoritarianism. Upper castes showed readiness to accommodate the aspirations and claims of backward classes. Parties that emerged on the basis of appeals to identities, on the basis of castes, region, and religion, had to transform their ideology under the pressure of electoral compulsions. India is the only country in the world where communist parties could come to power through elections and continue to be in power for a very long time in several states. But this is more important that communist party never lead the Union government, sometimes it was part of coalition government.

The impressive aspects is that today, we recognize political freedom and social equality as two cardinal aspects of our life. These are not merely granted by the Constitution of India but are vigorously advocated and defended both by people and groups. The democratic principles, institutions and practices have transformed most people of country from the status of subjects to the status of citizens. Successive governments have brought about reform in land relations that broke down the feudal domination. Reservation policies based on caste provided the socially disadvantages sections of the society access to education and employment opportunities as well as to representative political institutions. India is the only country that has an elaborate system of reservation in the form of quotas to ensure representation of the socially disadvantaged sections.

The greatest achievement of India over the past 60 years is that it remained a democracy and continue to be so on. Stating this may sound like stating something very obvious and ordinary. But it is worth stating. Many nations that became free from colonial rule around the same time, that became independent, could not remain democratic for long.

REFERENCES

1. *AbrolSakshi: "The Success of Democracy in India: From Inception To Now", Youth kiawaaz, December 10, 2010*

2. *Alam, Javeed: "Who Wants Democracy?" Hyderabad Orient Longman, 2004*

3. *Alok, V. N. & Chhubey, P. K.: "Panchayats in India: Measuring Devolution by States" Macmillan, New Delhi, 2010*

4. *Anderson, George: "Federalism: An Introduction" Ontario Oxford University Press, 2008*

5. *Arora, Balveer: "Adapting Federalism to India: Multilevel and Asymmetrical Innovations", in Balveer Arora and Douglas V. Verney (eds), 'Multiple Identities in a Single State: Indian Federalism in Comparative Perspective". Konark New Delhi 1995*

6. *Awasthy, S. S., "Indian Government and Politics", HarAnand Publications, New Delhi, 2006*

7. *Benedict Anderson, op. cit. theorizes the origin and evolution of nationalism as a modern phenomenon largely produced by print/ (media) capitalism and democracy. This theory –somewhat oversimplified – can also explain the Indian case.*

8. *Bhargava, Rajeev: " Democratic Vision of a New Republic", in R. Bhargava, 'The Promise of India's Secular Democracy', Oxford University Press New Delhi, 2010*

9. *Bhargava, Rajeev, Bagchi, Amiya Kumar and Sudarshan R. (Ed.): "Multiculturalism, Liberalism and Democracy", Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2010*

10. *Donald E. Smith, India As A Secular State, Princeton University Press Princeton, 1966*

11. Gandhi, M. K. : *"Democracy: Real and Deceptive"* Navajivan, Ahmedabad, 1961

12. Ghosh, Peu, *"Indian Government and Politics"* PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 2012

13. Hasan, Zoya (ed.): *"Themes in Politics: Parties and Party Politics in India"* Oxford India Paperbacks, New Delhi, 2013

14. Jayal, Nirja Gopal and Mehta, P. B. (Ed.): *"The Oxford Companion to Politics in India"*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2010

15. Kothari, Rajni: *"Politics in India"* Orient Black Swan Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 2014

16. Tiwari, Nupur: *"Women in Panchayati Raj"* Indian Journal of Public Administration, vol. 54 no. 1 July 2008.

17. The political system of India: An example of a sustainable democracy. Md. Manzurul Karim Department of Political Science, University of Chittagong. Bangladesh. The political system of India: An example of a sustainable democracy.

18. Vanaik, Achin and Suri, K. C. (Ed.): *"Indian Democracy"* Political Science, Vol. 2, Oxford University Press, 2013

19. Vora, Rajendra and Palshikar, Suhas, (Ed.): *"Indian democracy: Meanings and Practices:"*, Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd. 2006

20. 73rd and 74th Amendment Act 1992